Madsen is a Scandinavian restaurant and catering company based in South Kensington. Their food blends the traditional classics with modern Scandinavian cuisine, served in a warm atmosphere. After four years of trading, founder Charlotte Madsen Pringle felt it was time to develop the business and get to grips with the marketing of the restaurant.

The business was struggling to stay in the black and it was clear a fresh approach was needed to reinvigorate the restaurant. Charlotte received an email from Business Link and after browsing the UCL Advances SMILE website felt a mentor might be just what she needed to help her address her business problems.

Charlotte met Nasir Zubain, Sloan fellow, Consultant and SMILE Mentor – his parents ran a restaurant, and because he had a close connection with the industry he understood the particular problems small restaurants face. He combined his business acumen and unique understanding to help Madsen.

**The bigger picture**

Nasir and Charlotte worked on two main areas of the business: a marketing strategy and diversifying and developing the business model focusing on profit and growth.

The result of the consultation and mentoring process led to some interesting conclusions. Simple things like ensuring the lunchtime table setting looked less formal, diversifying the food offering and paying close attention to costs made a huge impact in a very short space of time.

Nasir helped the restaurant reposition itself and developed a marketing strategy for growth. “Nasir had a tremendous amount of relevant marketing experience,” says Charlotte. The marketing plan is still in the early stages of implementation but he has encouraged her to focus on the local community to secure repeat business which she had not considered in the past. Charlotte has put the plan in place and feels optimistic about the future.

**The future**

Charlotte and Nasir continue to work together and have remained in contact since their initial meeting. Through the UCL Advances mailing list Charlotte was kept informed about other UCL business support opportunities that could help her business, including the Goldman Sachs 10,000 small businesses programme.

Charlotte was a participant in the first cohort and has now completed the 10KSB programme.

“In short 10KSB is the best thing I have done for myself as an entrepreneur since starting the business four years ago. It has given me renewed energy and drive to bring the business forward.”

Charlotte Madsen Pringle, Founder, Madsen
About UCL
UCL (University College London) was established in 1826 and is ranked as one of the world’s top-ten universities. The university is a modern, outward-looking institution, with more than 4,000 academic and research staff committed to engaging with the major issues of our times. It has a global reach, with 34% of its students coming from outside the UK, from almost 140 countries.
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About UCL Advances
The centre for entrepreneurship at UCL, UCL Advances, offers training, networking and business support for staff, students and external entrepreneurs to encourage and enable new enterprises to get going. Unique in the UK Higher Education sector, its primary role is to promote a culture of entrepreneurship on campus and engagement with entrepreneurs and small businesses beyond UCL’s boundaries, and currently delivers over 30 activity programmes.

UCL Advances is affiliated with UCL Enterprise, which provides UCL’s structures for engaging with business for commercial and societal benefit.
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About Business Support
UCL Advances provides direct business support for internal and external organisations through a variety of programmes and activities such as 1–1 advice, problem solving through student consultancy, student internships, mentoring and others:
• We help London-based businesses grow and develop by analysing business needs and connecting them to relevant interventions such as industry mentors;
• Through pairing teams of UCL and LBS students with businesses we deliver short-term consultancy projects addressing specific organisation needs;
• We broker relationships and fund exchanges between new and aspiring entrepreneurs with experienced entrepreneurs in another member state of the European Union;
• Individual angel investors connected to UCL provide seed investment to SMEs engaged with UCL Advances programmes; and
• We offer fully funded SME Internships where UCL students spend eight weeks in a London SME working alongside the director(s) to deliver real results and lasting impact in the host organization whilst learning about enterprise.
www.ucl.ac.uk/advances/business/support

For more information see:
www.ucl.ac.uk/enterprise